



HOUSTON ACTION RESEARCH TEAM



MEMORIAL PARK
CONSERVANCY



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Communicating the Value of a Walk Through the Woods, Spring 2019

This HART, comprised of undergraduate students from environmental science, political science, cognitive science, psychology, and social policy analysis collaborated with Memorial Park Conservancy to identify ways to raise awareness of the value that urban forests can play in mental wellbeing. The team visited Memorial Park to assess the current trail system and usership. They researched connections between mental health and urban forests and interviewed park staff, guests, and local community partners to design a strategy for engagement to promote mental health benefits for visitors and create a means of communicating these benefits to targeted audiences and the public at large. Based on their findings, the team proposed two initiatives to highlight: paths and programs. For paths, the team considered the way the park will change in accordance with its Master Plan and developed user-friendly signage and website content to provide accurate information and communicate the mental health benefits for each of the existing trails. For programs, they recommended new partnerships and mental health opportunities focusing on two currently underserved populations: veterans and adolescents.

